

SOLDIER BOYS IN FRANCE AND CAMP WRITE HOME

WELCOME LETTERS FROM "THE BOYS" AT FRONT REACH ANXIOUS ONES AT HOME.

These letters from the soldiers are very interesting and we gladly publish them. All we want is that they be handed in to us at the office and in time so we can get them in good shape. Send in your soldier letters and let other folks read them.



A number of letters reached this city yesterday morning from men in cantonments in this country and from the trenches and camps of France. They came to reassure anxious mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters and friends that their boys were all right at the last date of writing and were very welcome.

First letter is from Corp. Clarence Bailey, son of Mr. and Mrs. Chas. G. Bailey of the Banner-News force. A part of Clarence's letter had been torn out presumably by the censor. His letter is as follows:

Dear Ones at Home: Received a couple letters from you a couple of days ago and seeing this will be my only chance to send you a few lines for some time I will get busy.

You are not getting many letters from me these days but don't worry, those Bush haven't got a shell with my name on it and I will try and see that they don't get one either, ha, ha. Well, I received your letter and the Grand Rapids Press saying I was a dead man and I want to tell you right now I am the liveliest dead man that you ever saw. I told you that they haven't got my number.

It must be getting like spring at home now. That is when everything is beautiful. It sure is great over here now. It was quite a lively place back home at this time last year. I have been gone over a year now. I got the watch you sent me O. K. I bought one here from the Salvation Army but I am going to see how many francs I can get for it. I like the one you sent best. It is 6:35 now and at home it is afternoon.

I haven't seen any of the boys yet but some of these days there will be a great old meeting over here, you bet.

Tell Raye to write. I have lost his address and I wanted to write him a dozen times.

We are having some pretty bad weather now. It rains all the time and is pretty cold. I tried to send a cablegram home when they had me dead but we are in a bad place to do anything like that and you are lucky if you get a letter at all. I think I guess some of the people thought that was one fellow died running, ha, ha. But don't worry for that don't help me any you know. I'm all right.

We pretty near had an addition to the family today. We have been asked to adopt one of these orphaned over here. Well, I kind of thought the matter and had quite a few "star boarders" like I used to be but there is always room in our house for one more you know and mother has loved us all so I may gather one in. How about it?

There is an aeroplane right over my head and it's quite low. We are having quite an exciting trip and perhaps you are reading about it. I suppose the papers have the war won by this time. There is an argument about it going on now in camp but I can't tell you anything. But this much I can say, I have seen a plane. I could fly over and give Dana a ride. Give all my regards and best regards and love to all the family. Good night.

Your son and brother,
Corporal Clarence C. Bailey,
Co. A, 2nd Brig. M. G. Bu. First Expeditionary Forces, France.

Mayor and Mrs. Elmer E. Fales are also in receipt of another letter from their son, Hugo, which is as follows:

May 5, 1918.
Dear Mother and Father: Just received your last letter dated April 12 and also a nice package from Mr. Hetherington. Mail comes through in quick shape but it takes quite a little longer for packages to reach us. At any rate they sure are welcome at all times. Yes, I saw an article in the paper in regard to packages but so far we have had no orders regarding same. Got the papers you sent at least some of them and they are very interesting to me. From them things seem to be running along at home as usual. It is surprising that more of the men haven't gone to camp than I have seen listed although there are so many men to draw from they don't get down the list very far. At present we are very nicely situated here, our camp is located in a very nice place and we are having fine weather, a little rain now and then but not much at that. I am down to my B. V. D.'s now and it's very comfortable. We have been hitting the half quite hard lately and have been doing some good work. It sure is a pleasure to take part when there is something big going on. As you know the Hun are hell to whip but they must and will be made to pay for their wrong and a good big interest will be taken on. I sure am sure these men that come over think at first that all they have to do is get to the front and everything will be over but after they are up here they buckle down to work and change their views and

Continued on page four

Dandelion Wine Tabooed.

A recent decision of the State Dairy and Food department puts a taboo on the manufacture for sale, of dandelion wine, something which a great many people were not looking for. For a number of weeks past many people of this vicinity have been picking the golden blossoms of the lowly dandelion with the intention of having a delicious drink later on after the fermentation of the chosen part of the plant had been completed and the sparkling wine had acquired enough pep, life and ginger to make it real and worth running through one's pipes. The decision of the department does not affect the manufacture of dandelion wine for one's own consumption, but will not allow of its being sold at soft drink establishments or in any other way or place. In the southern part of the state dandelion growing was started for the manufacture of wine on a large scale and the recent ruling will affect this industry greatly.

FORMER HOSPITAL HEAD IS NOW SAFE IN FRANCE

MISS JEAN CLARK, WELL KNOWN LOCAL GIRL, IS WITH HOS- PITAL UNIT "Q."

Miss Jean Clark, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Irvin Clark of West May street, a former superintendent of the Belding hospital, is now safe in France and her many local friends will be glad to read the following letter which she has written to her parents here.

Miss Clark wrote the letter while on one of the Cunard liners and evidently enjoyed the trip greatly as will be seen from her letter:

Dear Folks at Home: I am en route and have been given the privilege of writing this note although I can tell but little. I know you are going to be glad to just see my writing when you know I am at sea.

We are having such a good time; it's wonderful to be out on the ocean for the first time.

For about three days we were in a heavy fog and made very little progress; could hear boats whistling all around and see nothing but it was beautiful when it lifted and we could see the sun. I think a fog at sea is worse than at home for you can see things—here nothing but ourselves.

Very few of us have been sick; it has been so smooth; we are getting fine things to eat and all our girls are feeling fine.

The band plays every day and we have dances on deck. I spend all day out there and my two blankets come very good; it's nice to get all tucked in and just sit and read or work just what every one is doing at home. (I've been gone nearly two months.)

Evenings we play cards and have concert inside; altogether we are very happy.

We are trying to have as good a time as we can and not dwell on all that is so near ahead for us.

Must not ramble on any more and will write you as soon as I can again but don't get anxious if it seems like a long time. You can send this to Louise and it will do for both.

Lots of love and I am in good hands and I have faith that I'll soon be back to you all safe.

Jean.

When the Black Man's Life Was Cheap

A reader hands in the following notice of a public auction sale held in Pike county, Missouri, some years ago:

PUBLIC SALE—State of Missouri, County of Pike, to whom it may concern: The undersigned will on Tuesday, Aug. 29, 1846, sell at public outcry, for cash on premises, where Cook creek crosses the old Missouri road the following chattels, to-wit:

6 yoke of oxen with yoke and chain; 2 wagon beds; 2 nigger wenchers; 3 niggers; 3 nigger boys; 2 prairie plows; 25 steel traps; 1 barrel pickled cabbage; 1 hoghead of tobacco; 1 lot of nigger shoes; 1 spinning wheel; 1 loom; 13 fox hounds and a lot of other articles. I am grvine to California. James Smith, owner. Richard Dorr, cryer.

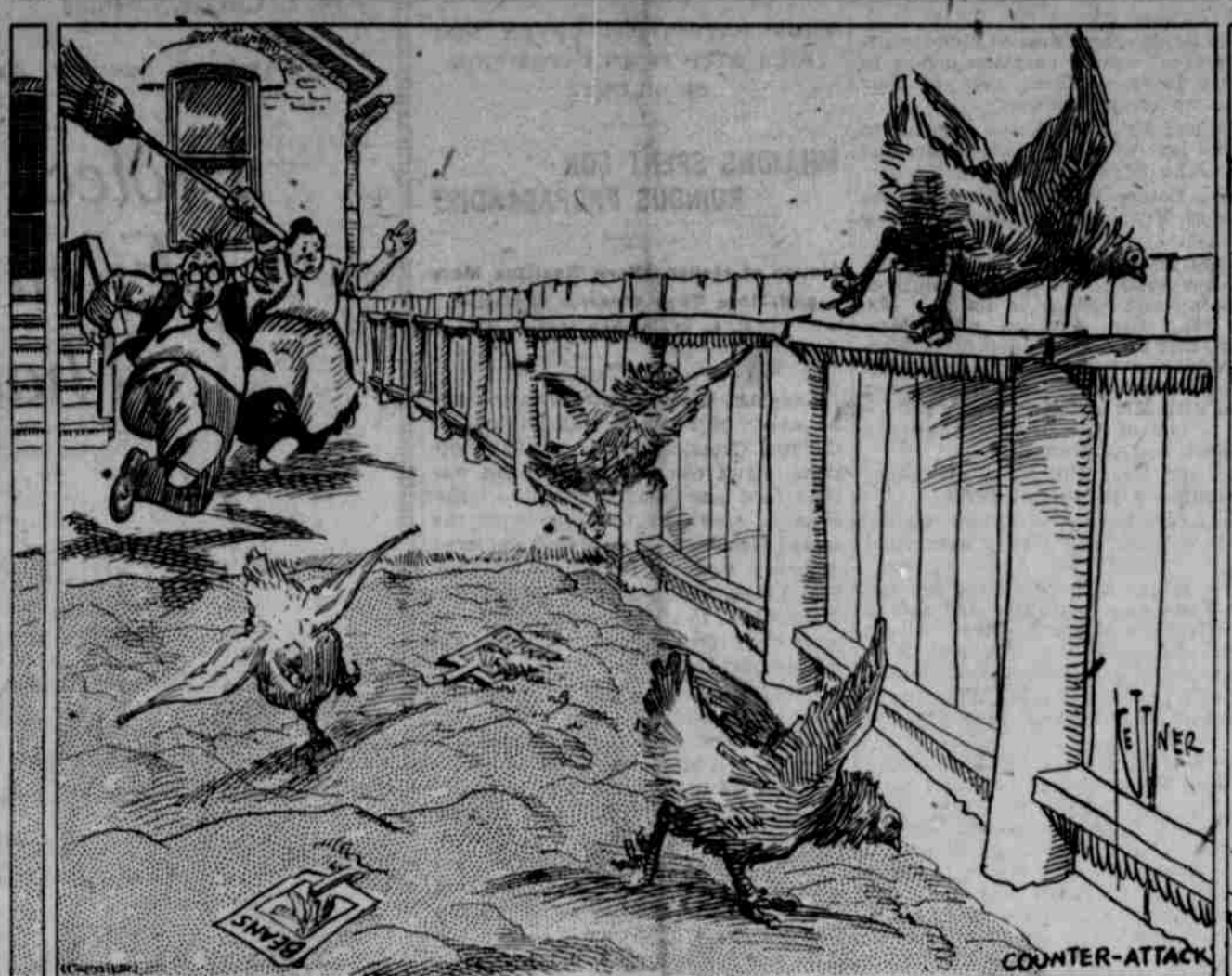
Free headcheese, apples and hard cider.

Yes, by the way, that sale was some few years ago—before the brave boys of the north had to show some people in the south that one man's life was just as valuable as another's even if a white skin did cover the one. Just travel back and think, mothers, of the anguish of those two negro women when their three boys were sold away from them and note that the "niggers" referred to and listed as chattels took second rank with oxen—other beasts of burden. Pickled cabbage is perhaps a barrel of sauerkraut and the traps and fox hounds tell us that James Smith, owner, believed in recreation for himself at least. Then think of the great turpentine "free lunch at noon" such as the one advertised would bring out if it were to take place in these days—and we'll wager a cookie that there would be plenty of headcheese and apples left over for another auction in these times of drought.

East Otisco Farmers' Club.

Program for the West Otisco Farmers' club June 6:
Opening song by the club.
Repeating the Lord's prayer—Club.
Select reading—Mrs. L. Tuttle.
Song—Ben Carpenter.
Recitation—Miss Arthalene Tuttle.
Oration—"Our Country"—Edward Reeves.
Song—Quartet, Fred L. Reeves, Herbert Ross, Mrs. Geo. Hall, Mrs. Roy Tuttle.
Hon. Thomas J. O'Brien is out with a statement favoring the reelection of all congressmen and senators, hence the question for discussion, "Would it be advisable to retain the present membership in congress?" W. B. Travis, leader.

Somewhere in the U. S. A.



The Charity Ball.

Due to the rush of work attendant upon moving and combining the two offices last week we forgot to say anything about the great Charity ball, which is being held in Crawford hall tonight. The blame for this rests on no one but ourselves and is entirely the oversight due to too much work last week, hence we absolve ourselves from all cussing and blame for the fault and hope everybody buys a ticket and goes to the Charity ball. The money goes to a good and worthy cause.

TO IMPROVE THE CONDITIONS ON A DANGEROUS ROAD

CITY TO PAY OUT BIG AMOUNT TO STRAIGHTEN AND CUT DOWN CANNON'S HILL.

City Street Commissioner James McGinley has a force of men busy on the road improvement job just south of Cannon's creek, on the hill between St. Joseph's Catholic cemetery and Riverview cemetery, carrying out the plans of the street committee of the council for a great and long needed improvement in the conditions of the hill and the sharp bend in the road at the top of the south hill.

The plan of Chairman Purdy of the street committee and his fellow committee men is to cut the high bank to the east side of the south hill down, throw the road bed over to the east from where it is at present, about 20 feet, cut the hill down about 10 feet and raise the bridge over the creek approximately six feet. The cutting down and filling in process is on now and the job, although a big one and entailing an enormous outlay of labor and money will be pushed to completion.

The road as improved will be very nearly straight instead of the dangerous "S" shaped curve and a very nearly clear view will be had in place of the obstructed one at present.

The contemplated cost is in the neighborhood of \$4,000.

A Teacher's Simple Duties.

A school teacher is a person who teaches things to people when they are young.

The teacher comes to school at 8:30 o'clock and when she has enough children for a mess in her room, she teaches them reading, writing, geography, grammar, arithmetic, music, drawing, cooking, board saving, crocheting, deep breathing, bird calls, scientific eating, patriotism, plain and fancy bathing, forestry, civics and other sciences too numerous to mention. When school is out she stays behind with five or six of the worst scholars and tries to save the state the job of reforming them later on. After that she hurries home to make herself a new dress and snatch a hasty supper before going back to attend a lecture by an imported specialist on the history of tribal law in Patagonia, which the superintendent thinks may give her some information which may be useful in her school work some day. A great many lecturers roam the country preying on school teachers and some of them are very cruel, talking to them so long that the poor things have to sit up until morning, when they get home, to get their daily test papers corrected.

School teachers' salaries range from \$30 a month up—but not far enough up to make them dizzy. On her salary the teacher must dress nicely, buy herself things for her work which the city is too poor to get, go to 25 lectures and concerts a year, buy helpful books on pedagogy, pay her way to district, county and state institutes, and enjoy herself during a three months' vacation which her salary takes every year. In addition the teacher is supposed to board away vast sums of money, so that when she becomes too nervous and cross to teach, at the age of 50 or thereabouts, she can retire and live happily ever after on her income.—Hiawatha News-Democrat.

RED CROSS NURSE MAKES A VISIT TO JESSE JAMES CAVE

INTERESTING LETTER FROM A FORMER LOCAL GIRL TELLS OF EXPERIENCES.

Miss Ruby Cameron, daughter of Mrs. Daniel Cameron, of the north side, has written her mother a letter which the Banner-News is pleased to publish this week.

Miss Cameron will be remembered by her many friends here, having gone to Grand Rapids a number of years ago where she took up a course in nursing and some time ago she enlisted as a Red Cross nurse. She is liable to go to France at any time, or she may be kept in this country to care for wounded soldiers who may be brought here from the bloody battlefields across the seas.

Jefferson Barracks, May 18, 1918.

Dear Mother: Well, it's one a. m. and has been raining since about 8 p. m. I am not busy and the nights drag out pretty long.

Yesterday I had letters from Hazel and Reub. Reub has bought back the drug store and hasn't much help so is working hard.

Did I tell you I got my cape and caps from Washington? The capes are not very different from my others and have a Red Cross on the front. The capes are dark blue broadcloth with a scarlet lining, come about to the knees. The undergarments are nice and look good with a uniform, have a military collar. So now I have the uniform complete.

Today had letters from Edythe and Eliza. No special news in either one of them.

They are building up new quarters right in edge of woods, are cutting trees down for the ground. Expect it will be just an ordinary bank house only partitioned off into rooms. They say it will be ready in three weeks. All the buildings here (except the bunk houses), are bright red brick and white trimming and among so much green and trees looks real pretty.

Well, yesterday morning three of us took a hike out to Jesse James' cave. We go out the road about two miles then a mile up the railroad, then about half a mile into the woods. It's real pretty, to the railroad and then there is a level with two tracks and just good walking distances on each side. Then on one side is a real high bank of quarry stone and there's brush and grass growing all out over it so it gives one the impression of castle walls; then down a deep bank on the other side is the Mississippi river. It's just grand, that's all. We passed a place where they were blasting the rocks. I never saw quarry rocks before.

We couldn't go more than the length of our sitting room inside the cave, it's so dark and the bottom is all big stones and a stream runs through. Then above it is high banks and a regular woods; down about a half mile farther on is the spring. We drank our fill. We took a lot of pictures; hope they are good; got home at 1:30 so tired I thought I'd never get back and all had a hot bath and sent a boy down to the canteen after sandwiches, then went to bed.

I have blisters on my feet, but I am not used to 7 or 8 mile hikes. But it was certainly worth the effort to take the trip and see it all. I knocked both heels off my shoes and got rotten dirty, but we did a lot of scrambling over rocks and around them. Am going again some day.

Yesterday morning we went down around the river and took pictures. Seems as though there ought to be boats on the river but I guess there aren't. It always looks muddy.

Four nurses left here for France a few days ago.

Don't know any more to write so I guess I'll close and snore a bit.

Love to all,
Ruby F. Cameron,
G. E. Nurses' Quarters, Jefferson Barracks, St. Louis, Mo.

Doubles Advertising Space.

Gordan H. Cilley, advertising manager of the Philadelphia store of John Wanamaker, announces that it is planned to use this season double the amount of advertising space used last season. This policy is adopted in order to overcome selling handicaps, imposed by war conditions, to properly educate people as to the new complexion of buying problems and to establish the great store still more firmly in public esteem as a service institution. It is an example which the wise will follow.—Exchange.

HORSES DRAG FARMER'S LIFELESS FORM ACROSS FIELDS

FRED CONDON, SON OF ED. CON- DON, DROPS DEAD ON HAR- ROW IN FIELD.

Fred Condon, aged 41 years, a farmer residing about three miles south and west of Smyrna, dropped dead from a stroke of apoplexy at about 10 o'clock Thursday forenoon, while engaged in harrowing a field of land in his farm, preparatory to putting in his crop of corn. Although Condon's death is supposed to have taken place at about 10 o'clock, the time is merely problematical but the team which he was working with was observed standing at a gate leading out of the field at about that time until noon, when his faithful wife, fearing something wrong, went out to see what was detaining Mr. Condon from coming in to dinner.

Evidently, when Condon fell from the attack of the apoplexy, he fell directly across the harrow, or harrow, to which the team was attached for when his lifeless body was found it was still lying across the implement with the head down in a tell-tale line made by a dragging foot, gave mute evidence of the place where the man had been stricken. When he fell, one line tightened up and the team, continuing on its way, made a circuitous route to the far end of the field and back again stopping when they reached the gate.

The standing team was seen by a number of passersby but nothing was thought of it and no one investigated until the wife became alarmed.

Mr. Condon was born in Vergennes, August 13, 1877, and on Nov. 23, 1904 was married to Miss Lulu Tower, and to this union, one daughter, Mildred, was born, who with her mother survives. Condon is also survived by his parents and one sister, Mrs. Frank Joslin of this city.

The funeral was held Saturday afternoon at 2 o'clock from the residence and burial was made in Smyrna cemetery. Rev. H. S. Ellis of Ashley, officiated at the funeral.

P. M. Track Settles.

Passengers on the P. M. going towards Saginaw always breathe easier after the sink hole near Sidney is settled. The track continues to settle in one place of about 30 feet long and although thousands of yards of earth have been dumped in this place in the past short time the track continues to settle. A steam shovel gang is busy now placing thousands of yards of earth in this sink hole in an effort to build up a good and solid track. It has at one time been so bad that the road had to be abandoned for a short time.

Holy Name Met.

The members of the Holy Name society met at the home of Theo Blasen, Sunday evening and a fine, though short, program was enjoyed. The evening opened with the singing of "The Star Spangled Banner" and closed with singing "America". Rev. Fr. John A. Klich entertained with a fine stereopticon exhibition.

Mrs. E. J. Knapp and granddaughter, Jennette Berry are Grand Rapids visitors today.

Kemp School Closes.

A very successful year of school was closed Friday, May 24 at the Kemp schoolhouse by Miss Genevieve Feyan.

A fine picnic dinner was enjoyed by the pupils, their parents and a number of guests. Following the dinner a number of games were played.

Those who have been neither tardy nor absent during the past school year are: Florence Jacoby and Ruth Scheid. This is a fine record, especially for little Ruth, who has over a mile to school and was brave enough to battle the great snow drifts and floods of the past season.

The pupils received their reports, after which the happy day was closed by all singing "America."

The work of Miss Feyan during the past year has been greatly appreciated by her pupils and we are all glad to know that she expects to return next September.

ALL MEN OF 21 MUST REGISTER AT THE COURT HOUSE

JUNE 5 WILL BE IMPORTANT DAY FOR ALL MEN WHO BE- CAME 21 SINCE LAST JUNE.

June 5 will be an important day in the life of every young man in the United States—we mean those young men who have become of the age of 21 since June 5, 1917, because on that day this year every young fellow who has become of age, will have to go to the courthouse at Ionia and register.

This means that every boy who became of the age of 21 between June 6, 1917 and June 5, 1918, both dates inclusive, will have to register for military service.

Adjutant General John J. Bersey emphasizes the fact that there is just as much business meant in the coming registration as there was in the one of June 5, 1917 and to evade the provisions of the law by not registering, as required, or assisting anyone else to evade the provisions of the law will be met with a severe penalty—a long term in one of the federal prisons.

The registration this year instead of taking place in the townships, wards or precincts in which the young man lives will be held in the court house at Ionia and will be before the local draft board for the county. This board will also pass on exemption and deferred classification.

It is expected that this registration will add more than 40,000 men to Michigan's list of draft men, the number of which was last year 377,179. The new registration will add for one million men to the draft list in the nation.

The bill authorizing the registration under it shall be placed at the bottom of the lists of those classes to which they are to be assigned.

All those who find themselves coming under the provisions of the new law must present themselves at the court house, Ionia, upstairs rooms of the draft board. The rooms will be open from 8 o'clock in the forenoon until the same hour at night.

Owing to the fact that a great many of the young men will not be able to get to Ionia conveniently the board suggests and appeals strongly to the owners of automobiles to take loads of local young men down to the county seat for registration. Train service from Belding is very good for this event, however, and the boys from this vicinity can leave here on the 11:30 a. m. train for Ionia and after registering, return on the train arriving here about 4:15 p. m.

Obituary—Andrew Paulsen.

Andrew Paulsen was born in Norway, November 18, 1861. When nine years of age he came with his parents to this country, settling in Winfield township, Montcalm county, where he spent practically all of his remaining years of life. He was married to Miss Bertha Dorman, of this city, at Howard City, May 21, 1899. The widow together with four brothers and three sisters survive to mourn the loss of a loving husband and brother. His death took place Saturday, May 18 and the funeral was officiated at by the Rev. P. Ray Norton, was held from the residence, Monday afternoon May 20. Burial was made in River ridge cemetery.

Gave the Boys Sendoff.

A large crowd gathered at the P. M. depot yesterday morning to give the boys leaving for Camp Custer a fitting sendoff. Captain Hubbell and the Home Guards and the Belding band under George Holmes were out and it was the first time any of the enlisted or drafted men were given a public ovation. Mayor Fales, on behalf of the board of commerce, presented the boys who left with a box of cigars. Those to go from here are George Everhart, H. G. McIntosh, Forest Beemer, Ernest Tupper, Arthur N. Hansen, George E. Trimble, Will Case and George A. Churchill.

John E. Luidens Dead.

Word was received here Saturday morning of the death in a Grand Rapids hospital Friday night, of John E. Luidens, for a number of years past superintendent of schools at Cedar Springs. Mr. Luidens had been hired as superintendent of the local schools and was to come here in a short time to get ready for the work ahead of him this fall and winter. The officers of the board of education are skimming around lively to get a suitable man to take up the vacancy in the local schools caused by Mr. Luidens' death.

There will be a dancing party at Beth's pavilion, Long lake, Saturday evening, June 1. Music by Graham's orchestra.

RED CROSS CAM- PAIGN GOES WELL "OVER THE TOP"

QUOTA OF \$2,200 IS VERY NEAR- LY DOUBLED AND MORE IS COMING IN.

That Belding is no slacker city is again proved by the way in which its citizens "came across" with cash and subscriptions in the Red Cross campaign which closed on Saturday last, nearly a 100 per cent over-subscription of the quota of \$2,200 allotted to this city being recorded.

The following communication from Treasurer Puffer* throws light of a general interest on the matter and shows in detail what the various figures for the city are:

The Red Cross drive in the city of Belding has closed with the very best response yet shown in a war campaign within our city. It will be gratifying to our townspeople to know that so large a percentage of the people participated. It is reported that practically everybody did something. The good will shown by a ready response by subscriptions, in many cases accompanied by money, was so general as to lead us to believe that the city is becoming thoroughly awakened with an earnest desire to cooperate with our government and is no longer a matter of doubt. The work was completed in record time showing that the organization, which Miss Florence Washburn and the committee of ladies in charge of the Red Cross work had formed, did its work in an exceptionally efficient fashion.

The Sunday schools of the city churches responded first, then came on the following Monday the house to house canvass with the following results: In the First ward \$489.00 was secured; Second ward, \$1,342.06; Third ward, \$1,370.20, making a total contribution to the American Red Cross contributed by the people of the city of Belding of \$3,201.26. To this amount was added a check of \$1,000.00 by M. M. Belding, making the grand total of \$4,201.26 contributed by this city to the Red Cross. This, it will appear, is \$2,000 above our quota which was \$2,200.

The committee wishes to extend, through this column, thanks to every one who participated in the campaign and lent their aid in any way in the success of this present drive, also to the people of the city, who so generously subscribed to this most worthy cause.

The Modern Woodmen were the first to contribute as a lodge to this fund.

This report is not final but includes only up to Monday night.

F. A. Puffer,
Treasurer.

The contribution of \$1,000 by M. M. Belding of New York, was entirely unlooked for and came as a complete surprise to the committee. It only goes to show the love which Mr. Belding still holds for this city and there is not a loyal person in this city but who will recognize it as such and appreciate the contribution very much.

The following is a letter of thanks sent by the local committee to Mr. Belding in recognition of the donation:

"Belding, Mich., May 28, 1918.
"Mr. M. M. Belding,
"New York City.

"Dear Sir: As directors of the Red Cross society for the city of Belding, we wish to acknowledge the receipt of your munificent contribution of \$1,000 to the Second Red Cross war fund and we desire most earnestly to express our thanks not only in behalf of our local Red Cross organization, but in the name of our soldiers and sailors whom this money may relieve or save.

"Most sincerely yours,

"H. J. Leonard.

"Florence Washburn."

A Red Cross display in the E. C. Lloyd store windows helped materially in creating interest and raising funds for the success of the campaign.

Philathea Class Had Outing.

The Philathea class of the Methodist Sunday school have a social event each month, the date for May came Saturday, the 25th. The morning was a little cloudy frightening the timid ones but a merry laugh of the braver spirits left town at 7 o'clock and enjoyed to the full the early morning ride. Nature was at her best and everyone enjoyed the ride out to Oakfield Center to the home of Mrs. Stultz, mother of two of our members. We received a cordial welcome and were handed the keys of the home, found fishing poles and bait awaiting us and were soon wading our way to the fishing grounds, returning in time for dinner, a hungry bunch. We found tables spread with tempting food and we all agreed that Mrs. Stultz knows how to cook fish for a crowd. In the afternoon we went up to the Gleaner hall where the Oakfield ladies were preparing for a Red Cross social; here we enjoyed an hour of music and social chat. At 7:30 we espied our limousine coming over the brow of the hill and reluctantly bade our hostess goodbye. The day is one long to be remembered and the June captain will need to get all her force working in order to give us as good a time.

Discovers Rare Plant

John J. Spriggs, local wild-plant lover, has a very rare plant, Orchis Spectabilis, common name, Showy orchis, on display at the Lamb grocery store. John found this rare plant in a plant hunt near Elwell.

Dentist's Offices close.

Notice is hereby given that the dentist's offices of the city will be closed every Wednesday afternoon from now on until October.